



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/635,624	08/10/2000	Paul A. Firestone		5848

20311 7590 05/02/2006

LUCAS & MERCANTI, LLP  
475 PARK AVENUE SOUTH  
15TH FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10016

EXAMINER
----------

FRANKLIN, JAMARA ALZAIDA

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2876

DATE MAILED: 05/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/635,624

Applicant(s)

FIRESTONE, PAUL A.

Examiner

Jamara A. Franklin

Art Unit

2876

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 11, 15, 16, 18, 22 and 23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 11, 15, 16, 18, 22, and 23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114*

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after a decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but before the filing of a Notice of Appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit or the commencement of a civil action. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 3/08/06 has been entered.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 11, 15, 16, 18, 22, and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Urbish et al. (US 5,734,343) (hereinafter referred to as 'Urbish') in view of Slavin et al. (US 5,819,234) (hereinafter referred to as 'Slavin') and Leitner et al. (US 5,587,575) (hereinafter referred to as 'Leitner').

Urbish teaches a way to eliminate the tollbooth by eliminating the need for vehicles to

Art Unit: 2876

slow or stop and deposit toll payments at the toll booth (col. 4, lines 46-58). A plurality of labels 15 are affixed in a variety of different locations on a vehicle 10 (col. 2, lines 45-51). The label contains information of a fixed nature, for example, the vehicle identification number, in a coded form. Bar codes have been found to be the label which is most machine readable, however, icons and alphanumeric text are also quite readable and may be used effectively. These various types may be used singly or in combination in the identification label (col. 3, lines 39-51). A detector 25 is used to pick up information (including identification number) about the vehicle 10 that is read from the label 15 as the vehicle and label pass under a light source 20. The identification number is then used to assess tolls on the vehicle as it passes a certain location (col. 4, lines 10-29).

Urbish lacks the specific teaching of establishing an account with the identification code at a central agency and transferring data containing the identification code from the reader to the central agency.

Slavin teaches an account corresponding to a transponder 30 and unique tag number for charging toll. The account is established at a Customer Service Center 72 (col. 5, lines 53-60).

One of ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized that establishing an account to be charged against would have been beneficial to the invention of Urbish since an account could have served as a established source for recording the charges made against the vehicle to which the account is associated. Therefore, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to modify the teachings of Urbish with the aforementioned teachings of Slavin to help maintain a history of tolls collected.

Urbish/Slavin lack the teaching of moving readers.

Art Unit: 2876

Leitner teacher portable readers for use by police or traffic officials to scan a code that has been attached to a vehicle (col. 3, lines 18-20 and lines 60-62).

One of ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized that moving the reader in conjunction to the code would have been beneficial to the invention of Urbish/Slavin for allowing the code to be read in a variety of conditions and situations including a case where the vehicle to which the code is affixed is located in an area not equipped for a fixed reader. Therefore, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to modify the teachings of Urbish/Slavin with the moving reader as taught by Leitner. Furthermore, the notion that a device can be made movable or portable is an obvious improvement upon the device unless there are new and unexpected results.

#### ***Response to Arguments***

4. Applicant's arguments filed 3/08/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to the addition of the limitation citing a passive vehicle identifier, the examiner submits that the vehicle identifier of the Urbish invention is indeed a passive light-readable indicia as seen in figure 1 of the reference. Also, in response to the newly included limitation citing implanting a plurality of vehicle identifiers, the examiner submits that Urbish again does teach the aforementioned as noted in col. 2, lines 26-30 of the Urbish reference.

The limitation citing the vehicle identifier containing a VIN number of the vehicle, as newly included into independent claims 11 and 18, had previously been rejected and noted as being read upon by the Urbish invention. The Urbish invention discloses a label containing

Art Unit: 2876

information of a fixed nature including vehicle identification number in coded form (col. 3, lines 39-44).

Regarding the limitation citing information concerning the vehicle to a central agency, the information comprising vehicle title, insurance, driver licenses, inspection, or emissions, the examiner submits that the Slavin invention discloses a central agency for inputting information concerning a vehicle. Inherently, this central agency is well known for the maintaining of vehicular records including driver licenses, insurance, and vehicle title, and records of individual drivers.

In response to applicant's arguments, the recitation "monitoring said vehicle for violations" has not been given patentable weight because the recitation occurs in the preamble. A preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See *In re Hirao*, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and *Kropa v. Robie*, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951).

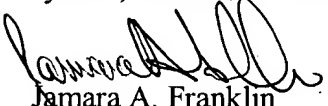
### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jamara A. Franklin whose telephone number is (571) 272-2389. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:00am to 4:30pm.

Art Unit: 2876


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Lee can be reached on (571) 272-2398. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jamara A. Franklin  
Examiner  
Art Unit 2876

JAF  
April 18, 2006



STEVEN S. PAIK  
PRIMARY EXAMINER